

Groundbreaking held for Double Eagle II

Story and photo by Joan Mier

A ground-breaking ceremony to mark the beginning of construction of the \$9.2 million Double Eagle II project was held December 18. The project includes construction of major improvements to the existing water and wastewater infrastructure at the city of Albuquerque's Double Eagle II airport located on the city's West Mesa. It is being built in order to provide the environmental infrastructure that is necessary to support the existing business community as well as to support the future development that will occur when Eclipse Aviation relocates to the site from its current location at the Albuquerque Sunport, according to Pete Doles, project manager.

Albuquerque City Mayor Martin Chavez spoke at the ceremony, pointing out how well New Mexico's legislators had worked together to get a project underway that will create high-paying jobs for its citizens.

"It's about Albuquerque having a viable economic future," he said.

The District will manage the construction of 14 miles of utilities, pump stations, reservoirs and a recreation trail. The contract to build the facilities was awarded September 29 to Albuquerque Underground Inc., Doles said.

Upgrades to the water system include building a new ground water storage reservoir with a 2.1 million gallon capacity, modifying existing water pump stations at the airport and the Soils Amendment Facility to pump water to the storage reservoir; building 16,000 linear feet of 24-inch water distribution line between the airport and the storage reservoir as well as new water distribution lines to existing and proposed future development at the site.

"We will also connect an existing well at the Soils Amendment Facility to the 24-inch distribution line and will



Participating in breaking ground, from left, are Dewey Cave, City Director of Aviation; District Engineer Lt. Col. Dana Hurst; Jim Hinde, City Aviation Planning and Development; Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez; Jim Czar, Chief Administrative Officer for the city; Jill Halverson from Sen. Bingaman's office; Tito Madrid from Rep. Heather Wilson's office; Gary Tonjes, president of Albuquerque Economic Development, Jim Hart, Albuquerque Open Space, and Mike Provine, Molzen Corbin & Associates.

build 32,000 linear feet of 8-inch water distribution line from the Volcano Cliff's Reservoir to the airport and install a booster pump station for the reservoir's distribution line," Doles said.

The wastewater component of the project includes building a new collection system and connecting the Soils Amendment Facility to that system. There will also be two lift stations built to pump the wastewater into the line, and 45,000 linear feet of 8-inch wastewater pipe and 1800 linear feet of 12-inch sewer line to connect into the city's

wastewater collection system. The 4.5 mile paved recreation trail will be built following completion of the pipelines. The work is scheduled to be completed by August 2004.

"All of this infrastructure will allow Eclipse Aviation to begin building its aircraft assembly and corporate headquarters facilities for its staff of about 2,000 employees," Doles said. An additional 1,000 workers are expected to be employed in support elements and other businesses that will locate at the aviation business park.

Currently, Double Eagle airport houses about 240 mainly private aircraft with 120,000 to 140,000 flights annually. It is currently supported by Albuquerque Sunport revenues and should become self-supporting by the time all of the new development is completed.

The Corps is partnering with the city of Albuquerque on this Section 593 project. Section 593 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 provides authority to the Corps to enter into cost-sharing agreements with non-federal sponsors on publicly owned environmental projects in central New Mexico. The federal government pays 75 percent of the project's cost and the city, as the sponsor, pays 25 percent. □